SUICIDE AWARENESS and PREVENTION

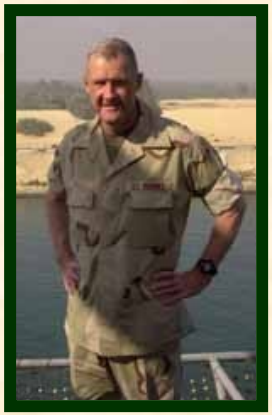
General Military Training

For 10 years, Suicide has been

either the second or third

leading cause of death among

active-duty Sailors and Marines.



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Serious Public Health Threat

- More people die by suicide each year than by homicide.
- Center for Disease Control Survey Results
  - Suicidal thought: 20% each year
  - Suicidal thought with a plan: 16% each year
  - Suicide attempts: 8% each year
  - Suicide attempts requiring medical treatment: 2-3% each year

Definitions

- Suicidal behaviors encompass a broad range of acts, including suicidal attempts, gestures, threats and suicidal thoughts.

- Suicide is an intentional act resulting in one's own death.

Definitions

- Suicide attempt is an intentional act, causing self-harm, where death would have occurred without direct intervention.
- Suicide gesture is an intentional act suggesting a cry for help by causing physical self-harm or intending to cause physical self-harm. Suicidal gestures would not cause death if left unattended.

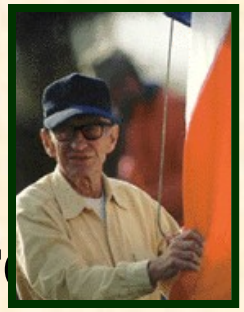
General Statistics

- The number of suicides per month are fairly constant throughout the year.
- More women than men attempt suicide, but more men than women actually kill themselves.

General Statistics

- Caucasians have higher suicide rates than other ethnic groups.

- Suicide is most common among the elderly. It is becoming more and more common among teens and young adults.



General Statistics

- Married people have a lower rate of suicide than those who are single, separated, divorced, or widowed.
- Suicide is more common among the unemployed than working people.
- Petty Officers (E4-E6) have a higher rate of suicide than all other paygrades combined.

Navy Suicide Rates

Navy suicide rates are lower than civilian rates when matched for gender, age, and racial differences.

Although rates are lower among military, suicide is still one of the top killers of Sailors and Marines.

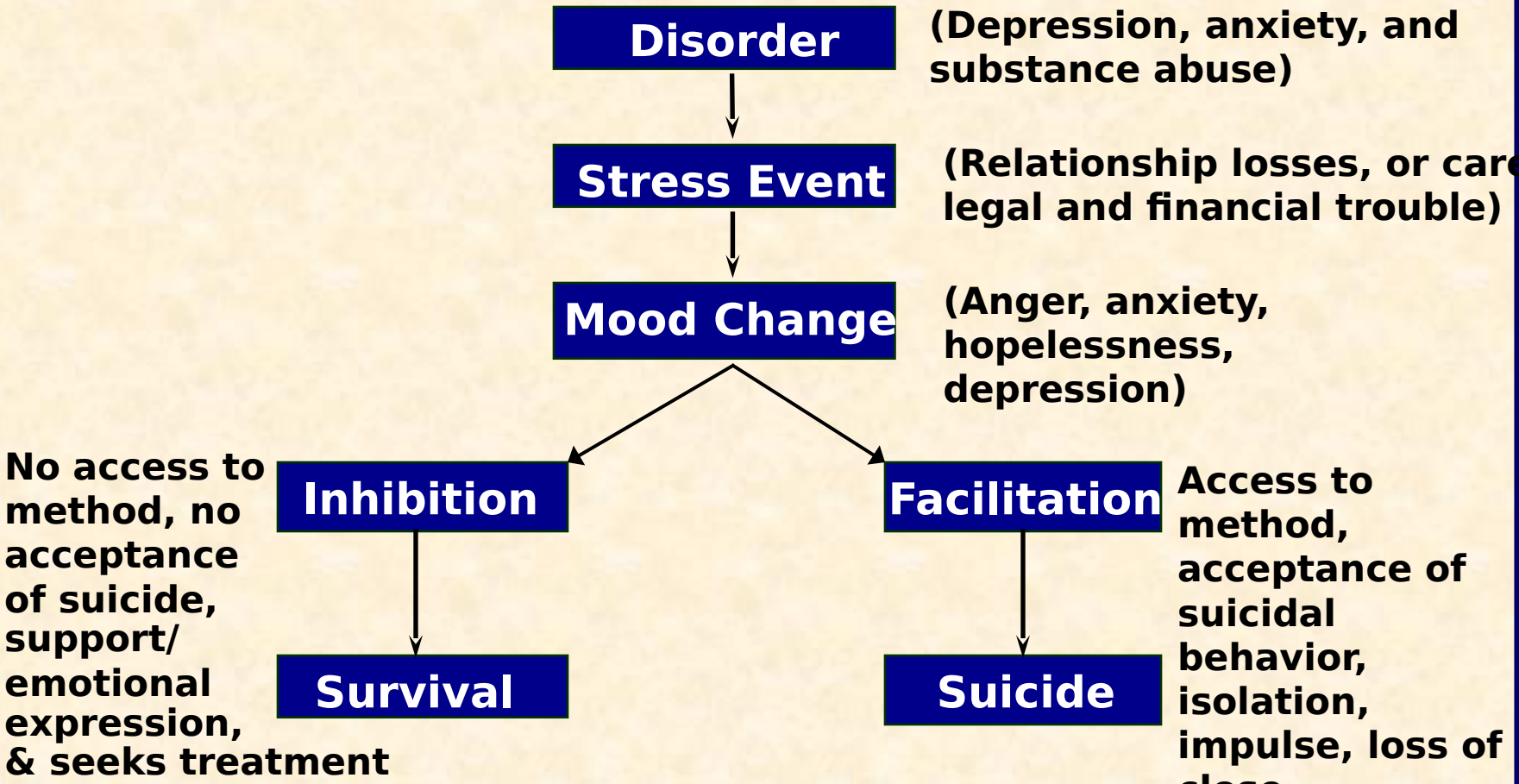
Three Key Risk Factors

- Mental health difficulties such as depression and/or substance abuse.
- Suicidal thoughts, which are often hinted at or discussed with others.
- Previous suicide attempts.

Common Warning Signs

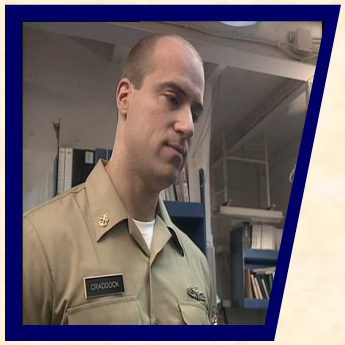
- Preoccupation with death.
- Giving away possessions.
- Relationship difficulties.
- Impulsive anger.
- Legal or financial trouble.
- Isolation or withdrawal.
- Performance difficulties
- Inability or unwillingness to connect with potential helpers.

Suicide Model *


Disorder
(Depression, anxiety, and substance abuse)
Stress Event
(Relationship losses, or career, legal and financial trouble)
Mood Change
(Anger, anxiety, hopelessness, depression)
No access to method, no acceptance of suicide, support/ emotional expression, & seeks treatment
Inhibition
Facilitation
Access to method, acceptance of suicidal behavior, isolation, impulse, loss of close relationships by suicide, & avoid treatment
Survival
Suicide

*David Shaffer, M.D., Columbia U.

Be a First Responder!



- A first responder is a person who first recognizes the threat or risk of suicide and responds to prevent the possibility of a suicide.

- A first responder could be anyone - a supervisor, Officer on Duty, family member, Shipmate, coworker, or friend.

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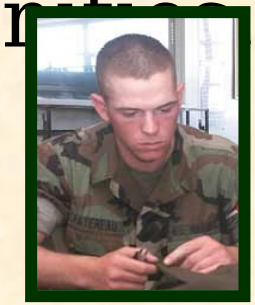
First Responder Duties

- Learning what to observe and the possible meanings of what is observed.
- Adopting an attitude that “I can help.”
- Understanding what to do.
- Knowing where to get professional help from resources in the military & civilian communities.



Helping a Suicidal Person

- Be direct.
- Be willing to listen.
- Be non-judgmental.
- Get involved.
- Don’t dare him or her to do it.
- Don’t act shocked.
- Don’t be sworn to secrecy.
- Offer hope.
- Take action!
- Get help!

Ask.

Intervene immediately.

Don’t keep it a secret.

Locate help.

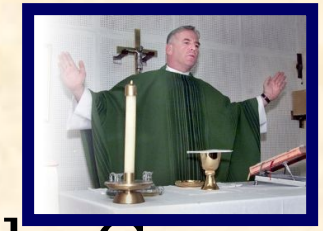
Inform the Chain of Command.

Find someone to stay with the person.

Expedite.

Help Resources

- Medical Services
- Command leadership



- Chaplains
- Marriage and Family Counselors
- Substance Abuse Counselors
- Fleet and Family Support Centers

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The Workplace and Suicide

- Workplace violence culminating in suicide is rare in the Navy.
- Incidents occur so seldom that it would be difficult to determine accurate rates or patterns of occurrence.
- We need to be aware of the signs of workplace violence so we can help resolve the problem(s).

Protective Factors

- Unit cohesion
- Involvement in the life of the Navy
- Sense of reward
- Sense of being of assistance to others
- Feeling of being valued
- Feeling of support in times of need
- Camaraderie with others

HONOR COURAGE COMMITMENT

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Summary

- Definitions of terms
- General statistics
- Risk factors and warning signs
- First responders
- A.I.D. L.I.F.E.
- Workplace violence and suicide
- Core Values

References

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